



## Lower Duwamish Waterway Site

June 2006

### EPA Plans to Clean Up Contaminated Soil This Year

*This fact sheet summarizes the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) cleanup decision for contaminated soil at Terminal 117 on the Lower Duwamish Waterway. After careful consideration of community concerns, EPA has decided to require removal of about 16,000 tons of contaminated soil at Terminal 117 this year.*

#### Cleanup Will Remove Contamination to Protect Human Health and the River

The goals of the soil cleanup at Terminal 117 are to protect human health and prevent contamination from reentering the river after it is cleaned up and recontaminating nearby sediment (mud). These steps will be taken:

- In the upper 2 feet, remove soil contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) above 10 parts per million.
- Below 2 feet, remove soil contaminated with PCBs above 25 parts per million.
- Over the entire site, remove soils contaminated with total petroleum hydrocarbons (TPH) above 4,000 parts per million.
- Test the soils left behind to make sure they meet EPA's action levels before placing clean soil.
- Construct an asphalt cap across the area to prevent rainwater from seeping into the soil and moving any remaining contamination into the river, also to provide a clean surface for people using the property.
- Monitor the groundwater quarterly for at least five years to make sure that any remaining contamination does not move into the river.

#### Why We Decided to Go Ahead with the Cleanup Now

EPA has carefully considered the cleanup options. EPA believes that it is important to remove high levels of contamination from the site this year to protect public health. This will allow the cleanup of the contaminated bank and sediments to proceed as scheduled in 2007.

It has been difficult to balance all of the community's and EPA's concerns. It was clear that the community wanted to postpone parts of the upland cleanup until future land use is better defined, and more public review could occur. The community's vision for the property includes recreational, commercial, or residential use.

Waiting to clean up soil in the upland area until land-use issues are better defined could mean postponing cleanup of the bank and sediments indefinitely and leave high levels of PCBs near the surface. Doing only a "hotspot" removal would not remove highly contaminated soil below the surface, which must be done to prevent contamination from moving to the river through the groundwater.

Because health concerns are most important, EPA decided it makes sense to go forward with the cleanup as proposed. This action will do several things:

- Prevent highly contaminated material from being transported to the river,
- Allow cleanup of contaminated sediments on schedule next year, and
- Leave the site safe for industrial use.

EPA believes the result will provide immediate environmental protection and *will not rule out* any future actions if the zoning and land use should change.

## EPA Responds to Community Concerns

EPA, the Port of Seattle, and the Washington State Department of Ecology met informally with more than 100 community members late in May to discuss the cleanup plan. The remainder of this fact sheet responds to concerns raised by Duwamish Community members and others at that meeting.

**People are concerned that the soil cleanup is proceeding too quickly. Some suggested that the “hot spots” should be cleaned up this year and the rest of the upland property be addressed next year after further consideration of land use and community concerns.**

EPA’s cleanup decision is based on the current land use. After careful consideration of the concerns stated by the community, EPA concluded that the best course of action is to go ahead with the cleanup. EPA has decided to complete the soil removal before the end of this calendar year. High levels of PCBs and TPH will be removed and will allow the sediment removal to proceed on schedule in 2007. Removing soils with only the highest contamination of PCBs and TPH now would not allow the bank and sediment removal to proceed next year and would not protect people who currently work at Terminal 117.

**People are concerned that the cleanup may not meet Department of Ecology standards for a final cleanup.**

The soil cleanup proposed by the Port and approved by EPA is acceptable to Ecology as an interim action. Ecology supports this interim action. This cleanup will remove enough contamination for the sediment cleanup to proceed as scheduled. To make sure the cleanup is effective, groundwater monitoring will be required for at least five years.

**People are concerned that the cleanup will not reduce contamination enough for future changes in land use.**

This soil cleanup will allow for either industrial or commercial use. The property is currently zoned as industrial by King County, and the Port of Seattle plans to maintain the current use. The Seattle City Council is reviewing an area of South Park that includes Terminal 117 for annexation. If the City should change the zoning, this cleanup might allow for other uses, such as a park, depending on the specific plans for the property. EPA will evaluate any future plans and make sure that people and the environment are protected.

**People are concerned that the cleanup does not fit their vision of recreational or residential use of the property.**

This cleanup will not prevent further cleanup if the land use changes. EPA’s preliminary risk evaluation indicates that this cleanup might be protective for many future uses, including recreational. However, we cannot know for sure without a specific future use plan. EPA is prepared to evaluate any future plans for the site and require additional cleanup, if needed.

**People are concerned about environmental justice issues, including exposures to toxics in their local community.**

EPA acknowledges that the community has environmental justice concerns. This action will reduce potential exposures to toxics in this community. We believe this is a positive step for the community because 16,000 tons of contaminated soil will be removed, and allow for further cleanup actions next year.

## EPA Will Keep the Community Informed

Later this summer, before construction begins, EPA and the Port will meet with the community to answer questions about the cleanup and get community input on how to minimize the construction impacts on the surrounding neighborhood. EPA will provide the community with updates on the construction.

## Terminal 117 Cleanup Background

In March 2005, EPA held a public meeting and presented a draft plan for cleanup of the contaminated bank, shoreline and sediments at Terminal 117. Based on public input, EPA selected a cleanup plan for those areas in the summer of 2005.

At that public meeting, EPA heard and agreed with community concerns about the lack of soil characterization in the nearby upland area. As a result, EPA delayed the cleanup for one year and asked the Port of Seattle to take more upland samples. Extensive sampling found high levels of PCBs and total petroleum hydrocarbons.

The Port prepared a cleanup plan for the upland property and revised it in response to comments from EPA, Ecology, and the community. EPA and the Port presented the revised upland cleanup plan to the community at a public meeting in May 2006 for public input. The upland cleanup work will take place this summer, and the sediment cleanup work is now scheduled for 2007.

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### More Information

You can read more about the Terminal 117 cleanup in documents available at the locations below. Please call for an appointment.

#### Georgetown Gospel Chapel

6606 Carleton Avenue South  
Seattle, WA, 206-767-3207

#### EPA Region 10 Records Center

200 Sixth Avenue  
Seattle, WA, 206-553-4494

#### Washington State Department of Ecology

3190 160<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE  
Bellevue, WA, 425-649-7190

#### Or visit the EPA website:

<http://yosemite.epa.gov/r10/CLEANUP.NSF/sites/LDuwamish>

### Questions?

If you have questions about the Terminal 117 cleanup, please contact one of the following persons:

#### General Information

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Si desea hablar con alguien que  
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